

After earning bachelor's and master's degrees from Central Michigan University, French served as a public policy and environmental consultant before settling in Ishpeming and beginning his career with American Transmission Co. (ATC), a high-voltage electric transmission system company. As the external affairs manager for ATC, French contributes to Marquette County's development by streamlining and enhancing access to affordable electricity for hundreds of communities across Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Having been with ATC for 16 years now, French is responsible for developing, coordinating, and managing relationships between ATC and the Michigan-based customers and stakeholders who make ATC's work possible.

French participates in numerous community development organizations and remains devoted to improving American infrastructure and the quality of life in the Upper Peninsula. His commitment to economic development is exemplified through his service with Marquette County's Economic Development Corp., Dickinson Economic Development Alliance, and Operation Action U.P., where he works to identify and address regional opportunities that advance economic development in our state's most rural areas. French also understands the importance of learning the skills needed to succeed in today's economy. In conjunction with the Midwest Skills Development Center Advisory Board and NICE Community Schools, he has provided the guidance to equip the next generation of great leaders with the skills they need to succeed. French's commitment to his profession, community, and neighbors has been essential to his success, and I am confident that he will continue to inspire others in the community to take an active role in improving the quality of life in the Upper Peninsula.

Mr. Speaker, French's accomplishments in service to the Upper Peninsula cannot be understated, and his family and community can take pride in knowing that Northern Michigan is a better place thanks to his work. On behalf of Michigan's First Congressional District, I congratulate Mr. Brett French and wish him well as he continues to make a difference in the lives of others.

TRIBUTE TO CHRIS COFFELT

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 16, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Chris Coffelt, Superintendent of Central Decatur Community School District, for being named one of Education Week's 2017 "Leaders to Learn from."

Each year, Education Week searches across the country for some of the most innovative and forward thinking educators our schools have to offer. Chris certainly fits that mold. His tireless dedication to educational excellence has given rise to a new culture of student growth and success in the Central Decatur Community School District.

Prior to Chris's arrival, the school district had a difficult time retaining high-quality teachers for extended periods of time, which contributed to lower student achievement. Since

taking over, Chris has made Central Decatur a destination for some of Iowa's best teachers. His innovative programs have helped turn the school district around and for the first time in years they are seeing student tests scores grow in a number of key areas. Chris' ability to empower teachers in his district has brought about a new level of success for not only his teachers, but the students as well.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Chris in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better his students, teachers, community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Chris on receiving this outstanding recognition and wishing him nothing but continued success.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CARMEN DELGADO VOTAW

HON. JAMIE RASKIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 16, 2017

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and commemorate the remarkable life of Carmen Delgado Votaw, one of my constituents who passed away on February 18, 2017 at the age of 82. Ms. Votaw was a civil and human rights giant and passionate participant in the global women's rights activist community.

Ms. Votaw, who was born in Yabucoa, Puerto Rico, spent her career acting upon a vision of empowerment and inclusion for all women, especially in Latin America. She was a born community organizer, using immense tact, intellect, and grace to educate and enlighten others in order to open up cultural and political avenues for the advancement of women. Due to her years of work and advocacy in Latin America, she is credited with an increase in the number of countries that have signed the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women; a greater number of women in political and appointed offices; improved access to technology for rural women; and a higher literacy rate among women and girls.

Ms. Votaw received on multiple occasions presidential appointments in recognition of her outstanding abilities, including being appointed as Deputy Chair to the National Advisory Committee for Women. She served as Chief of Staff to Jaime Fuster of Puerto Rico in the House of Representatives, marking the first time a Hispanic woman had held that title. She was a founding member and President of the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women and a board member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute. Ms. Votaw traveled around the globe to promote her agenda of civil and human rights. She visited 70 countries to participate in and speak at women's rights forums, including five United Nations World Conferences on Women. She is a published author, most notably having written the biographies of other distinguished Puerto Rican woman.

Among the organizations that have honored Ms. Votaw for her contributions to women's rights are the U.S. Marshals Service, the Instituto de Puerto Rico of New York, the Na-

tional Institute for Women of Color, Hispanic USA Magazine, Federally Employed Women (FEW), and the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women. She has received the Hispanic Heritage Award for Education, a Civil Rights Award from NASA, MANA's Las Primeras Award, the National Cuban American Women's Association Award, and the National Council of Hispanic Women's Outstanding Achievement Award. She was inducted into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame.

Even with her chock-full schedule of global engagement and leadership, Ms. Votaw was deeply devoted to her family and to her role as a grandmother. Please join me in extending condolences to her family and expressing gratitude for her life of dedication to helping all people find their voices. She made tangible contributions to the civil and human rights movements, the effects of which will be felt for generations to come.

COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF CAMP FIRE'S ABSOLUTELY INCREDIBLE KID DAY

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 16, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 20th year of Camp Fire's Absolutely Incredible Kid Day, which observed the third Thursday in March and is devoted to sending uplifting messages to the youth in their lives.

Founded in 1910, by Luther Gulick, M.D., and his wife, Charlotte Gulick, Camp Fire is a leading national youth development organization that guides "young people on their journey to self-discovery."

As founder and Co-Chair of the Congressional Children's caucus, I understand the importance of encouraging and supporting our youth to grow and thrive in this world.

Camp Fire's Absolutely Incredible Kid Day honors our nation's youth by asking adults to write letters of encouragement and inspiration to the incredible kids in their lives.

This is a simple and impactful way to let the youth know how much people care and support them.

There are numerous ways for adults to participate in this call to action including using social media to tag, tweet, post, and write letters of love and support to kids.

The campaign has received the critical acclaim of child and family care experts, award winning authors, noted psychologists, and adults and kids everywhere, including Dr. Stephen R. Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families*; Tipper Gore, who is a leading child advocate; and the famous Astronaut, the late U.S. Senator John Glenn.

Celebrities such as Oprah Winfrey, Jim Carrey, and Cindy Crawford have also given their support to Absolutely Incredible Kid Day.

In Houston, Texas we know that it truly takes an entire community to raise a child.

Houston has a distinct history of uplifting the youth in our community so they can excel in any area they choose.

A few examples of Houstonians who have benefited from community support are: the entertaining Beyoncé Knowles Carter; the hilarious Jim Parsons, from the *Big Bang Theory*;